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Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

7880th meeting

Wednesday, 8 February 2017, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Yelchenko	(Ukraine)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Kandeel
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Italy	Mr. Cardi
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Tumysh
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Sweden	Mr. Vaverka
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Final progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2017/89)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Final progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2017/89)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Côte d'Ivoire to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Marcel Amon-Tanoh, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/89, which contains the final progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

I now give the floor to Ms. Mindaoudou.

Ms. Mindaoudou (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you and the members of the Security Council, Mr. President, for this opportunity to present the latest report (S/2017/89) of the Secretary-General on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire and to brief the Council on recent major developments in the country.

Since the previous time I briefed the Council (see S/PV.7601), a little more than a year ago, Côte d'Ivoire has once again passed a test in its holding of democratic elections, including a constitutional referendum on 30 October 2016 and elections to the legislature on 18 December. Despite a few protests in the run-up to the referendum and some problems at various polling stations during the legislative elections, the people of Côte d'Ivoire voted peacefully and calmly. The validation of the final results by the Constitutional Council was carried out in a peaceful, orderly atmosphere. All of the observer missions — national, regional and international — agreed that the results of the vote reflected the will of the electorate and that the organization of the referendum and election was transparent and trustworthy.

I would like take this opportunity to once again commend the people of Côte d'Ivoire for their determination to maintain a peaceful atmosphere throughout the process; the national authorities, including the Independent Electoral Commission, for organizing both elections without major incident; and, lastly, the security forces for doing their part to secure the electoral process coolly and efficiently.

As I did prior to the presidential election of October 2015, in the period leading up to the constitutional referendum and the legislative elections I used my good offices to encourage the various stakeholders to maintain an orderly environment conducive to the election campaigns, which they did. In particular, the women of Côte d'Ivoire took an active part in the promotion and implementation of a non-partisan approach to matters of national interest. Between the 2015 presidential election and the referendum and legislative elections of 2015, they participated actively in debates on social, economic, security and political issues. A significant number also ran for office in the legislative elections, and although the number of seats held by women in the National Assembly decreased, despite the new Constitution's proclamation of gender parity, this bodes well for increased participation by women in future elections and public office, among other things. I would therefore like to pay tribute to the tireless efforts of the Government, the majority and opposition political parties, civil society, traditional, religious and community leaders and women's and youth groups.

The new Constitution, which launches a Third Republic, and the new, representative Parliament that resulted from inclusive elections afford Côte d'Ivoire an opportunity and impetus to fully consolidate the country's gains and establish long-term stability, particularly if efforts are made to ensure that the dividends of the economic recovery that has taken place since the post-election crisis of 2010 and 2011 reach the people and enable them to benefit fully from that growth.

While national reconciliation is making much slower progress than the economic recovery, we are

still seeing notable advances. That is owed in part to the publication of the report of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission — as was recommended by the Security Council in resolution 2226 (2015), and which is a major step forward for the national reconciliation process — and also to the upcoming establishment of the new Senate, which could speed up national reconciliation significantly. In addition to that, the Government has continued to compensate the victims of previous crises, unfreeze assets and restore occupied properties. In his New Year's address, President Ouattara also pardoned 2,942 detainees, including some who had been imprisoned after the post-electoral crisis. All of that has contributed to positive momentum. Nonetheless, the prosecution of those alleged to have committed crimes during the post-election period is still feeble. In that regard, in order to ensure Côte d'Ivoire's long-term stability, it is crucial that investigations be carried out swiftly and in full, if we are to create conditions in which all those who committed serious abuses or violations of human rights can be brought to justice, regardless of their political affiliation.

On another front, the delays in prosecuting alleged perpetrators of sexual abuse and gender-based violence, and in providing care for their victims, despite preventive efforts in that connection over the past 10 years, remains a concern. The timely adjudication of such cases is critical to ensuring security and support for victims, who represent the most vulnerable elements of society — women and children.

The national police, gendarmerie and the armed forces of Côte d'Ivoire were able to effectively secure the referendum and legislative election despite certain limitations and challenges. Although it is true that some members of the armed forces revolted in January in protest over their salaries and living standards — and others from within the gendarmerie, corrections officers and firefighters tried to follow suit, making the same demands — those mutinies revealed that efforts must continue to be made to enhance soldiers' standards of living and to set up a professional army.

The expeditious implementation of the 2015 Law on the Organization of the Defence Sector and the Armed Forces of Côte d'Ivoire, the 2016-2020 Military Planning Law and the 2016-2020 Domestic Security Planning Law must successfully and definitively address the grievances that were highlighted. The January mutiny mirrored that of 18 November 2014, in that the modus operandi was the same: the demands were similar; both situations were settled in the same way, through a negotiated agreement; and no soldier was disciplined for insubordination. The implementation of those laws are therefore integral to the transformation of the security sector, which, inter alia, must touch upon the themes of professionalism and responsibility.

It is therefore essential that the Government of Côte d'Ivoire continue to prioritize the reform of the security sector — military, gendarmerie and police — as well as the sustainable reintegration of former combatants into society, with support from its bilateral and multilateral partners.

The security situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains stable. Its national security institutions have demonstrated their ability to effectively and even-handedly address latent security threats, both within and outside the country. Nevertheless, some challenges remain with regard to the proper equipping and financing of law enforcement agencies. Reported human rights violations have also decreased over the past five years.

In the past two years, the mission has supported the National Human Rights Commission for Côte d'Ivoire through institutional support and capacity-building at the national and local levels, aimed at improving the ability to monitor, investigate and report on human rights violations and abuses, pursuant to the country's legislation and international human rights treaties ratified by Côte d'Ivoire. The Commission will then be able to take over, among other things, the monitoring and the implementation of the joint United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)-Forces armées de Côte d'Ivoire (FACI) mechanism, created on 24 August 2015, which seeks to enable swift action against any allegation of soldiers committing human rights.

Since the adoption of resolution 2284 (2016), we have worked closely with the Government, the United Nations country team and key partners on the development of a transition plan for UNOCI, which was formally endorsed by stakeholders on 17 October 2016. It identifies residual priorities in six key areas: social cohesion; human rights; security sector reform; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, weapons management and civilian disarmament; defence, security and law enforcement; and communications, particularly the transfer of ONUCI FM radio. I would like to praise the Ivorian

Government for its tireless efforts to ensure that the transfer is carried out according to the recommendations of the United Nations. In that regard, the plan also identifies implementation partners and resource requirements. The transfer of those priority functions to the Government, the United Nations country team and other partners is nearly complete.

Meanwhile, we are on schedule for the definitive closure of UNOCI by 30 June. The civilian personnel have been scaled back gradually and, by the end of April only 159 will remain — of which 148 will work exclusively on the physical closure of the mission. The 61 civilian, military and police field offices will be fully closed by 15 February. The mission's assets are being liquidated, in accordance with the plan drafted and approved by Headquarters in New York. By that date, the majority of the mission's uniformed personnel will have left Côte d'Ivoire.

Major political milestones have been reached with the successful holding of the referendum and legislative elections in a peaceful environment. Economically, the country continues to surge forward with infrastructure works and increasing foreign direct investment. However, we must bear in mind that some challenges continue to require the attention and engagement of the people and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the support of their partners. In particular, national reconciliation must be actively pursued and transitional justice expedited; the security sector needs to be overhauled, pursuant to applicable laws; former combatants need to be sustainably reintegrated into society; and the economic, social and cultural rights of Ivorians must be promoted if we are to avoid civil servants from making untimely demands and carrying out crippling strikes and demonstrations. Taken separately or together, all of those challenges will determine Côte d'Ivoire's trajectory towards lasting stability.

The departure of UNOCI is imminent, and only four months away. Allow me to take this opportunity to convey my appreciation and admiration to the Ivorian people and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire for their firm commitment to moving away definitively from the past crisis to a future of peace and shared prosperity. I would also like to appeal to our partners to continue supporting the efforts of the Ivorian people, but above all to continue supporting — in the very short term — the implementation of the transition plan by financing the identified activities for the consolidation of the peacekeeping gains achieved by UNOCI during its 14 years in Côte d'Ivoire. Only then will the United Nations intervention in Côte d'Ivoire, through ONUCI, be a real success story. On all of those issues, the combined support of the Security Council, Member States, international partners and the United Nations country team remains essential to ensuring that Côte d'Ivoire is headed irrevocably towards sustainable peace and stability.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the troop- and police-contributing countries for supporting the United Nations in the service of peace and security. I commend UNOCI forces for their courage and commitment. They have played a crucial role in making that progress possible. Allow me also to pay tribute to the military and civilian personnel who made the ultimate sacrifice by giving their lives in service to UNOCI.

Once again, I thank the members of the Security Council for their invaluable support.

The President: I thank Ms. Mindaoudou for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First and foremost, I would like to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Marcel Amon-Tanoh, and to thank him for attending today's meeting. Similarly, allow me to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou, for her comprehensive briefing, as well as to commend her efforts and the work of the entire UNOCI team.

Uruguay welcomes the most recent report (S/2017/89) of the Secretary-General on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. We note that the country has continued to make great strides in strengthening its institutions, which is key to achieving sustainable peace. Above all, we commend the progress made through the recent holding of a constitutional referendum and peaceful legislative elections, as well as in promoting and protecting human rights, fostering national reconciliation and promoting cross-border cooperation to combat the scourge of terrorism.

Almost a year ago, the Security Council ended the sanctions regime imposed pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004). We believe that, to date, the Government has

been responsible in its approach and we encourage it to continue its efforts. We are aware that there is still a long road ahead, but we are certain that Côte d'Ivoire is now on the right path to peace and the rule of law.

Mr. Okamura (Japan) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou, for her update on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, where peace and democracy have been restored. I would also like to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Marcel Amon-Tanoh, for being here today.

(*spoke in English*)

Allow me to make a statement as we mark the final progress report (S/2017/89) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). After 14 years, UNOCI is finally drawing to a close. It is as though we are reading the final chapter in a long saga, with a happy ending after a very dramatic story. UNOCI is a particularly unique tale. Whereas most peacekeeping operations are deployed in the aftermath of a crisis, UNOCI experienced escalated violence on the ground and faced the risk of relapse into civil war during its deployment.

UNOCI has faced and overcome many challenges, such as implementing the peace agreement; supporting the electoral process, including generating a voters list and issuing identity cards; a sitting President who refused to accept his electoral loss; undertaking a protection-of-civilians mandate when there are two opposing military forces; and even becoming caught up in the extreme situation itself. Nowadays, such situations are not unfamiliar to us.

UNOCI constitutes a handbook for many extreme scenarios that peacekeeping might face. UNOCI has seen them all, and it offers us many lessons for the future. It also pioneered many innovations, including inter-mission cooperation with the United Nations in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The Quick Reaction Force concept was also developed over the course of UNOCI's deployment.

I recall the day when the Constitutional Council announced that Laurent Gbagbo had won. At that time, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Choi Young-jin asked the Ambassadors of major countries to gather in his office. I was among them. He told us that he could not certify that announcement and that he could certify only the outcome that the Independent Electoral Commission had issued the day before, proclaiming Alassane Ouattara as the winner. He made his determination clear and asked for our unified support. An unusual situation followed. There were two Presidents, two Prime Ministers, two Foreign Ministers and two military forces. UNOCI worked to protect Alassane Ouattara, who was under siege inside a hotel. Foreign Minister Marcel Amon-Tanoh was also among those under siege. The incumbent President, Mr. Gbagbo, then declared that the United Nations must leave. The United Nations refused, but then faced great difficulties with Mr. Gbagbo's supporters. And indeed, a number of stray bullets did fly into UNOCI headquarters.

I would like to testify to the profound dedication of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Choi Young-jin and of UNOCI staff. Despite the risks, they overcame the extreme difficulties the mission faced. Without their bravery, the conflict might not have been resolved and we would not have peace today. I personally owe a great deal to UNOCI's role to protect civilians. When months of tension escalated into street violence, a number of diplomatic colleagues and I were rescued thanks to the heroic efforts and professionalism of the French Operation Licorne and UNOCI.

(*spoke in French*)

I cannot conclude my intervention without underscoring the bold and resolute efforts of the Ivoirian people, average citizens fighting for peace and democracy. When the armed conflict broke out, citizens took to the streets to demand a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The security forces then opened fire, and many people lost their lives. I remember the day when women took to the streets to demand peace. They were armed only with pots and pans, which they were beating. Even after being attacked and dispersed by security forces, they continued to beat their pots and pans throughout the night in their homes. The vital role that women play in promoting peace and security could not have been more visible.

Following the crisis, the story continued with international mobilization. We commend UNOCI's dedication during the transition period and to date. UNOCI, the United Nations country team and Ivoirian authorities strove to meet the difficult post-conflict challenges, including the reform of the security sector and national reconciliation. We can all be welcome the conclusion of the UNOCI mission, six years after

the civil war. I am convinced that the purpose of the United Nations is to support the determination and courage of ordinary people who pursue peace and democracy. UNOCI has fulfilled that mission and will forever remain in the history of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Through you, Sir, I would like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Marcel Amon Tanoh, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire. It is a genuine pleasure to have him present here today at this meeting of the Security Council.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia welcomes the briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou. We congratulate her on her excellent leadership and also congratulate all civilian and military personnel for their dedication to peace and stability.

I first wish to salute the efforts undertaken by the people and Government of Côte d'Ivoire in favour of national dialogue, peacebuilding and political unity. Clear examples include the presidential elections held on 25 October 2015, the constitutional referendum and the legislative elections. We reaffirm resolution 2284 (2016), which extended — for the last time — the mandate of UNOCI until 30 June, as a sign of the positive progress achieved by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.

All countries have challenges that they must face. In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, it is of course the people and the Government of the Côte d'Ivoire, in the framework of its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, that must meet those challenges in the framework of the democratic values of peace and integration.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Amon Tanoh (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to express on behalf of the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency Mr. Alassane Ouattara, and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, our best wishes for the success of the Ukrainian delegation during its presidency, and to pay homage to all Council members for their tireless efforts to maintain international peace and security.

I would also like to reiterate the congratulations of the Ivorian Government to Secretary-General António Guterres for his outstanding election as head of our Organization.

I also commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou, for the quality of her briefing and the report submitted for consideration by the Council (S/2017/89). We also wish to congratulate and thank the entire staff of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) for its dedication to the cause of peace in our country. With four months ahead until the closure of UNOCI, on behalf of the Ivorian Government I take note with great interest of this thirty-eighth report of the Secretary-General and welcome the thorough implementation of resolution 2284 (2016), our road map. Since the adoption of that resolution, our country has undergone a substantial transformation that makes the definitive return to peace and our path towards development irreversible, in spite of the twists and turns that are inherent to the lives of nations and that can be seen around the world.

Since our last meeting (see S/PV.7681), the conditions that led to the lifting of the sanctions regime and the decision to draw down UNOCI have been consolidated further. The country inaugurated the Third Republic on 8 November 2016, following the adoption by referendum of the new Constitution on 30 October 2016. The Constitution of the Third Republic turns a final page on the crisis that our country experienced over the past decade. It strengthens national cohesion and the stability of the country. It provides Côte d'Ivoire with solid, credible and democratic institutions. That is demonstrated by the plurality of the first National Assembly of the Third Republic, which is characterized in particular by the return of the opposition and the presence of numerous figures in Parliament who are independent of political parties.

Côte d'Ivoire is a country that is secure and at peace. The mutinies of a small faction of the army, based on old demands of a corporate nature, cannot call that conclusion into question. However, they have motivated the Government, in particular through training and greater discipline, to accelerate the necessary professionalization of the armed and security forces with the entry into force of a law on military programming and internal security forces. The first decisions taken in that framework, which include the appointment of new leaders at all levels of our armed

forces and security forces, as well as the improvement of the living and working conditions of our soldiers, will transform their daily lives and capabilities in a lasting way. The President of the Republic, who is fully aware of these events, is working daily to resolve the deep-rooted causes. These measures also put the finishing touches on the ambitious reform of the security sector and consolidate the achievements of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, which our country courageously carried out in record time and for which we provided more than 70 per cent of the funding.

Côte d'Ivoire is riding an undying wind of optimism. The rate of growth of the gross domestic product over the past five years has been on average 9 per cent per year, and the cumulative amount of foreign direct investment remains high — an eloquent testimony to the renewed confidence of our partners in our country. The Government now seeks to redistribute, through its inclusive development policy, the fruits of that growth to Ivorians, in particular to the most disadvantaged, while taking into account all the imperatives of development.

The forthcoming drawdown of UNOCI should not end our collaboration. On the contrary, it should allow us to place our collective action in the framework of the fight against regional and global challenges. That includes terrorism, which struck my country in March 2016, following many others, and which constitutes a major threat to peace and security in our region and beyond. That notwithstanding, the terrorist attack in Grand-Bassam enabled my country to highlight the great ability of its forces to respond appropriately to this type of threat.

We therefore welcome the deployment within the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali of the Senegalese rapid reaction force battalion, which has long served in our country, and whose capacities, together with those of all other forces, will be decisive against the terrorist groups that are destabilizing Mali and exerting great pressure in terms of security on our country and all the neighbouring countries of Mali. I have faith in our ability to go further in preventing the terrorist threat and strengthening the ability of our States to respond, if we remain unified.

The countries represented here and the entire international community have given a great deal for the peace and reconstruction of Côte d'Ivoire. The time has come for Cote d'Ivoire to serve the cause of peace everywhere. Our country wishes to increase its participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations; in that regard, it is counting on the support of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to strengthen the capacity of its forces in that area. Already, a deployable battalion will soon be able to participate in United Nations operations, with the help of our main strategic partners.

Above and beyond that, and with its experience in crisis management and the philosophy of dialogue and peace — which has always underpinned its action in Côte d'Ivoire and throughout the world — the Ivorian Government asks Security Council members and all Member States to support its candidature for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the term 2018-2019 in the elections scheduled for June 2017. As those present know, our candidacy was endorsed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union. It embodies the values that are at the heart of the work of the Security Council and of our Organization at a time when our world must show more solidarity and mutual understanding in the face of new threats.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Security Council on the steadfastness it has shown in managing the crisis in The Gambia and for its crucial support to ECOWAS. This made it possible to uphold the free choice of the people of The Gambia in electing President Adama Barrow. The management of this situation demonstrated that we — the United Nations, regional economic communities and the African Union — must work together in order to ensure that democracy and the aspirations of peoples to freely choose their leaders prevail everywhere.

UNOCI will remain a success story — a tremendous achievement whose lessons will inspire United Nations peacekeeping operations and the commitment of our Organization to peace around the world. The country that UNOCI will leave behind in June is a country that is standing on its own feet — a prosperous nation. It is the largest economy among the francophone countries of West Africa and one of the largest in the region. Its fate will be determined by the Ivorian people. The vision of the President of the Republic, which he has consigned me to convey, is clear. In his capacity as guarantor of our country's institutions, he will continue to work tirelessly to ensure the development of a modern, united and strong nation, led by rejuvenated Ivorians

aware of the impact of their actions on the progress of their nation.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Ivorian people and the Ivorian Government, I would like to once again reiterate to the members of the Security Council and to the entire United Nations system my sincere thanks and profound gratitude for the enormous sacrifices that have been made for my country.

The President: I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on this subject.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.